



UN HABITAT

UN ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

THE STATE OF ASIAN CITIES 2010/11

UNEP
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UCLG ASPAC
United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific

CASE STUDIES

WHEN CIVIL SOCIETY TACKLES EMPLOYMENT DEFICITS

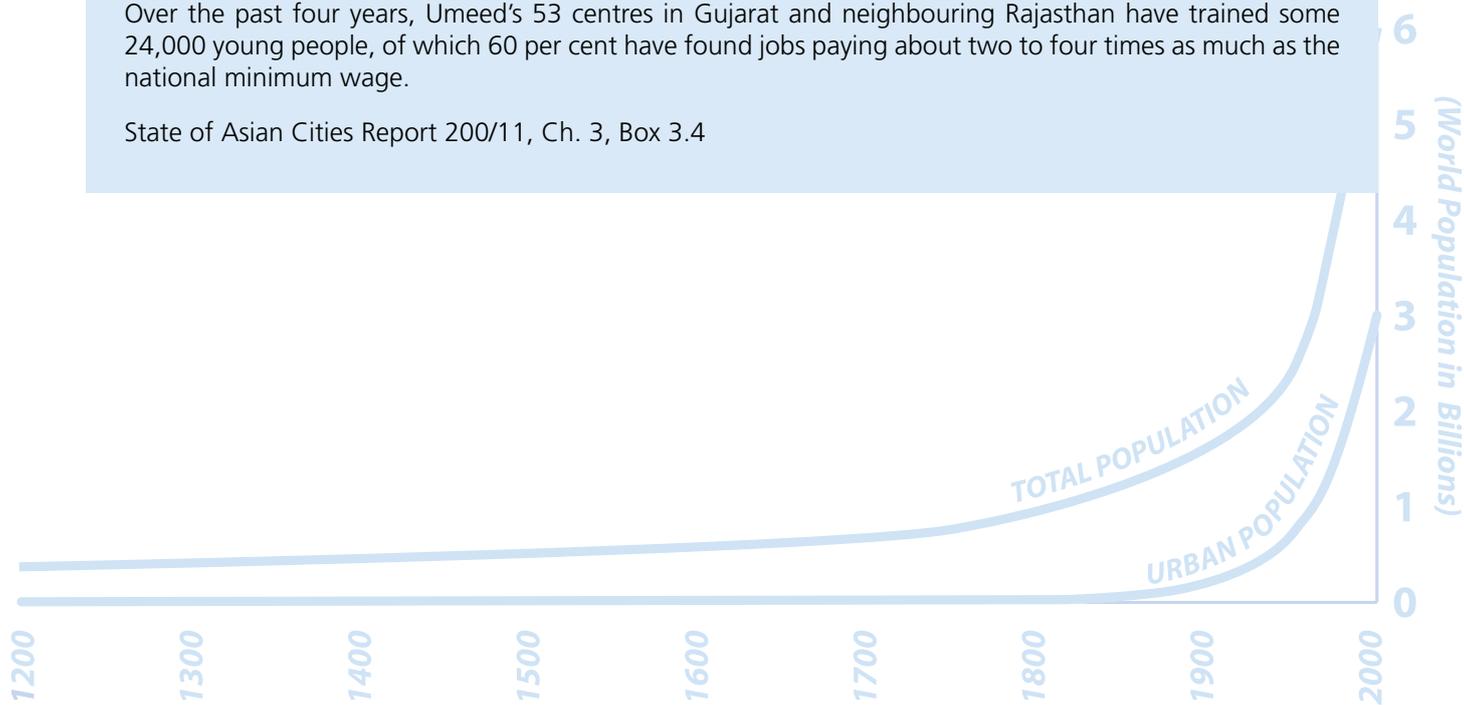
In India as in many Asian and other developing countries, and despite continued growth, the formal sector remains largely unable to provide gainful employment to young people. On the other hand, illiteracy or lack of training maintain too many young people remain for life in informal sector jobs (casual or self-employment), if any. This is why in 2005 and in partnership with the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, a non-governmental organisation known as *Saath* launched a scheme designed to enhance young people's money-earning capacities and opportunities.

This includes classroom training, guest lectures, exposure visits, on-the-job training, and a detailed evaluation of the student's progress. In 2005, the first centre was established where more than 1,200 youth were trained, and subsequently found employment in the formal sector. The success was such that less than two years later the state government decided to promote the scheme through the Gujarat Urban Development Mission, and it became known as Umeed ('hope' in Gujarati).

For admission to the job placement-based programme, candidates must (i) be of 18-35 years of age; (ii) have dropped out of school or college; (iii) be from a vulnerable (slum or rural) family, and (iv) pay a fee of Rs. 500 (US \$11). The fee ensures that only candidates who are serious about enhancing their skills will participate. The total cost per student is about Rs.4,500 (or US \$98), and the remaining Rs.4,000 (or US \$87) is funded partly by the government and partly by an international foundation. Fees can be paid for in two instalments, or through charities or donations.

Over the past four years, Umeed's 53 centres in Gujarat and neighbouring Rajasthan have trained some 24,000 young people, of which 60 per cent have found jobs paying about two to four times as much as the national minimum wage.

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